

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA*

LARRY RACHLEFF, music director

LUKE HSU, violin

Saturday, November 6, 2010

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

Celebrating 1975-2010
35 Years

THE SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC RICE UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM

Overture to "The Bartered Bride"

Bedřich Smetana
(1824-1884)

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Allegro moderato

Canzonetta. Andante

Finale. Allegro vivacissimo

Luke Hsu, soloist
Cristian Măcelaru, conductor

INTERMISSION

Also sprach Zarathustra!, Op. 30

Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

Einleitung (Introduction)

Von den Hinterweltlern (Of the Backworldsmen)

Von der großen Sehnsucht (Of the Great Longing)

Von den Freuden und Leidenschaften (Of Joys and Passions)

Das Grablied (The Grave Song)

Von der Wissenschaft (Of Science)

Der Genesende (The Song of the Convalescent)

Das Tanzlied (The Dance-Song)

Nachtwandlerlied (The Night-Wanderer's Song)

The reverberative acoustics of Stude Concert Hall magnify the slightest sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.

SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Sonja Harasim,
concertmaster
ANNE AND CHARLES
DUNCAN CHAIR
Chloé Trevor
SoJin Kim
 Jiyeon Min
Tiantian Zhang
Robert Landes
Katrina Bobbs
Tracy Wu
Heather Kufchak
Hannah Dremann
Andy Liang
Mary Jeppson
Creston Herron
Jacqueline Murchie

Violin II,

Xiaoxiao Qiang,
principal
Joanna Park
Hyun Jun Kim
Sarah Arnold
Emily Jackson
Genevieve Micheletti
Mark Kagan
Brooke Bennett
Alyssa Yank
Carmen Abelson
Meredith Peacock
Benjamin Brookstone
Rebecca Nelson
Vivian Fu

Viola

Roberto Papi,
principal
Molly Gebrian
Kathleen Magill
Timothy Rowland
Amy Mason
Dawson White
Jules Sulpico
Lynsey Anderson
Rainey Weber
Meredith Kufchak
Blake Turner
Jill Valentine
Ashley Pelton

Cello

Rosanna Butterfield,
principal
ANNETTE AND HUGH
GRAGG CHAIR
Brian Yoon
Chauncey Aceret
Coleman Itzkoff
SeHee Kim
Meredith Bates
Matthew Kufchak
Allan Hon
Emma Bobbs
Sarah Stone
Autumn England
Danielle Rossbach
Benjamin Stoehr

Double Bass

Emily Honeyman,
principal
Ian Hallas
Nicholas Browne
Nicholas Cathcart
Patrick Staples
Robert Nelson
Daniel Smith
Renaud Boucher-
Browning
Nina DeCesare

Flute

Kayla Burggraf
Gina Choi
Garrett Hudson
Aaron Perdue
Henry Williford

Piccolo

Gina Choi
Garrett Hudson
Natalie Zeldin

Oboe

David Barford
Sophia Parente
Kevin Pearl
Geoffrey Sanford
Emily Snyder

English Horn

David Barford

Clarinet

Nicholas Chona

Clarinet (cont.)

Erika Cikraji
Daniel Goldman
Jared Hawkins
Natalie Parker
LeTriel White

E-flat Clarinet

André Dyachenko

Bass Clarinet

Daniel Goldman

Bassoon

Galina Kiep
Briana Lehman
Thomas Morrison
Jeffrey Nesrsta
Maxwell Pipinich

Contrabassoon

William Short

Horn

Katharine Caliendo
MARGARET C. PACK CHAIR
Rebekah Daley
John Dodge
Nicholas Hartman
Tyler Holt
John Turman
Nicholas Wolny
Alena Zidlicky

Trumpet

Patrick Corvington
Alexander Fioto
Jeffrey Northman
Alexander Pride
Aaron Ritter
Douglas Surber

Trombone

Kurt Ferguson
Samuel Jackson
Berk Schneider
Travis Sheaffer

Bass Trombone

Joshua Becker

Tuba

Austin Howle
Michael Woods

Harp

Juliana Beckel
Kristin Lloyd

Piano

Aya Yamamoto
CHARLOTTE A. ROTHWELL
CHAIR

Organ

Phillip Kloeckner

Timpani

Robert Garza
Aaron Guillory
Robert McCullagh

Percussion

Ethan Ahmad
Lonnie Dobbs
Robert Frisk
Robert Garza
Aaron Guillory
Robert McCullagh

Orchestra Manager and Librarian

Kaaren Fleisher

Production Manager

Mandy Billings

Assistant Production Manager

Ryan Retartha
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Allyson Goodman
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SeHee Kim
Heather Kufchak
Robert Landes
Haerim Lee
Caroline Nicolas
Xiaoxiao Qiang
Timothy Rowland
Alyssa Yank
Brian Yoon

Stage Assistants

Andrew Griffin
Aaron Guillory
Austin Howle
Robert McCullagh
Maxwell Pipinich
Kolio Plachkov
Travis Shaeffer
William Short
Patrick Staples
Douglas Surber
Micah Wright

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

WINDS, BRASS, PERCUSSION AND HARP LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

PROGRAM NOTES

Overture to "The Bartered Bride". Bedřich Smetana

Bedřich Smetana was born into a relatively affluent family in Litomyšl, Bohemia, an area that was then still a province of the Habsburg Empire. He began his career in Prague but grew disenchanted with the city's social climate after the failed revolt of 1848, so he took a job in Göteborg, Sweden, in 1856. When the opening of the Provisional Theatre in Prague was announced in February of 1861, along with a prestigious competition for a new opera in Czech, he abandoned his life in Sweden and returned home. In 1863, he won the competition with his very first stage work, **The Brandenburgers in Bohemia**, and quickly finished a second, though initially less successful opera, **The Bartered Bride**. Wealthy Prague audiences at its premiere found its rural setting too low-brow for their sophisticated tastes, but after a number of revisions, Smetana's charming and distinctively Bohemian score, inspired by the folk songs and dances of the area, ultimately won favor not just in Prague but throughout Europe. Today, along with **Má vlast (My Homeland)**, his nationalistic set of tone poems, **The Bartered Bride** is his most beloved work.

The story is a beautifully comical love tale of mistaken identity and complicated family relations. Marenka and Jeník are in love, but Marenka's parents want her to marry Vasek, the homely son of a farmer named Micha. Marenka's parents convince the matchmaker to pressure Jeník into renouncing his love for Marenka. In exchange for a hefty bribe of 300 gulden, Jeník agrees that Marenka will only marry a son of Micha. Marenka's parents are of course pleased with the deal, but Marenka is deeply troubled by her lover's evident betrayal. In the end, true love triumphs when Jeník reveals that he, in fact, is the long-lost son of Micha, and that he can therefore marry Marenka while still keeping his promise to her parents. So that everybody lives happily ever after, Vasek becomes a circus clown and finds love of his own with a pretty tightrope walker.

The Bartered Bride's spirited overture is one of the most popular in the orchestral canon. Its most striking feature is the extended string fugato (possibly portraying the village gossips), heard immediately after the joyful unison gesture that opens the work. The second theme is announced in the winds, and is followed by a beautiful love theme in the strings. The opening material then returns, first in the woodwinds and then in the strings, whereupon the fugato resumes, leading to a fortissimo climax that catapults the work to an animated close.

— Note by Amalia Bandy

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35. Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

After playing Lalo's **Symphonie espagnole** with violinist Yosif Kotek at a Swiss resort near Lake Geneva, Tchaikovsky was inspired to write his own violin concerto in the spring of 1878, right after he had completed his Fourth Symphony and his opera **Eugene Onegin**.

After completing the work in one month, Tchaikovsky intended the piece to be premiered in 1879 by the great Hungarian violinist Leopold Auer, but Auer refused to play the piece because of its extreme technical difficulty, and thus, the premiere was postponed. Two years later, the first performance was eventually given in Vienna by Adolf Brodsky to whom the concerto is dedicated. Reviews were mixed. Eduard Hanslick, for example, wrote that "the violin was not played but beaten black and blue." Despite Hanslick's criticism, Tchaikovsky's **Violin Concerto** has become a favorite among audiences and an everlasting masterpiece in the violin literature.

The first movement opens with a brief orchestral introduction which leads into a poetic soliloquy presented by the solo violin. The violin then plays the movement's main theme in a pastoral tone, reminiscent of the Swiss resort near Lake Geneva. However, the music eventually picks up momentum as it gives the soloist the first of many opportunities for pyrotechnical display. The lyrical second theme creates a long, rhythmic buildup into the development in which the

full orchestra presents the main theme in an odd 4/4-meter polonaise. The development features symphonic writing, ballet-like writing for solo violin, and a cadenza. Signaled by a flute solo, the recapitulation begins after the cadenza. An exhilarating coda soon follows and ends the movement in a brilliant whirl of rhythmic energy.

Introduced by a chorale for woodwinds, the slow middle movement reveals a melancholy melody played by the violin that is reminiscent of Tchaikovsky's depression. The woodwind choir then returns and concludes the movement after which an exciting finale follows without a break. But even in this dashing Trepak rondo, Tchaikovsky recalls the melancholy mood from the previous movement before he races exuberantly toward the final climax, daring listeners to sit still in their seats.

Coincidentally, today's date, November 6, is the day that Tchaikovsky died of cholera in 1893.

— Note by Luke Hsu

Also sprach Zarathustra!, Op. 30 Richard Strauss

Also Sprach Zarathustra!, the most abstract of Richard Strauss' tone poems, was premiered at Frankfurt-am-Main on November 27, 1896, under the composer's baton. As the subtitle "Freely composed after Friedrich Nietzsche" suggests, Strauss did not intend to set Nietzsche's philosophical treatise to music exactly, but rather meant the piece to be a meditation on his philosophies. As Strauss subsequently related in a letter, his approach was therefore incredibly broad: he intended "to convey an idea of the development of the human race from its origin, through the various phases of its development, religious and scientific," using scenes from Nietzsche only as inspiration.

Nietzsche's Zarathustra takes his name from the ancient Persian prophet Zoroaster, a real man, but in Nietzsche's work he is a fictionalized pedagogue who descends to earth after years of solitude and preaches Nietzsche's own moral philosophies. The most basic of these include the "will to power," or the fundamental life force that drives man's search for freedom, as well as the superior morality of the *Übermensch* (superman), who has successfully transcended good and evil in search of life's deeper meaning. The culmination of Zarathustra's preaching is the doctrine of the "eternal recurrence," which claims that all events will forever repeat themselves. Only the *Übermensch* can embrace this doctrine, because he takes responsibility for every moment in his life.

From the vantage point of musical rhetoric and sheer orchestral power, the introduction of Strauss' *Zarathustra*, subtitled "Dawn," is one of the most impressive sections in the whole symphonic literature. Strauss associated the ascending trumpet phrase C-G-C, the first three tones of the overtone series, with "Nature," and as nature is the fundamental force behind human experience, it, along with the clashing key of B major (representing humanity), pervades the piece.

A timpani roll, low strings and organ pedal begin the first section after the introduction, titled "Of the Backworldsmen." Here Strauss captures the image of primitive creatures groping about before they come upon religion, an event signaled by a statement of the Gregorian chant **Credo in unum Deum (I believe in one God)** in the horns. An ascending B minor passage opens the more chromatic "Of the Great Longing," which then moves to "Of Joys and Passions." At this point in Nietzsche's poem, Zarathustra learns that by directing and controlling his passions, he can transform the contempt he feels for them as an "evil" force into virtue. Strauss' version is not as uplifting: he casts it in C minor until the trombones dramatically introduce what scholars call the "Disgust" motive, which unites in dissonant juxtaposition pitches from the keys of C and B. In the next section, "The Grave Song," a solo oboe depicts in B minor Strauss' bittersweet reflection on lost youth and life's end, with a flash of the "Nature" theme emerging just for a moment at the section's climax. After this, divided cellos and basses present a somber fugue in "Of Science." Beginning with the familiar C-G-C motive, this appropriately mathematical fugue subject contains all twelve tones and

is structured according to rigorous metrical proportions. As more instruments enter, the fugue gradually becomes chaotic and agonized, until it gives way to the "Song of the Convalescent." The frenzied activity and abrupt dynamic changes in this passage make it the most programmatic in the piece, since in the corresponding portion of the Nietzsche, Zarathustra "leaps up like a madman" and periodically "cries out" so as to scare the animals around him. The excitement continues until woodwind trills introduce the "Dance-Song," a Viennese waltz that combines elements of the "Nature" motive, the "Disgust" motive, and a variation on the "of Joys and Passions" theme.

The final section, "The Night-Wanderer's Song," begins with the sound of a bell tolling twelve times, recalling the point in Nietzsche's work where Zarathustra finally proclaims that his joy has reached an eternal state. By the last chorus of Strauss' rendering, however, we wonder whether he was truly satisfied with the resolution that Nietzsche ultimately granted Zarathustra: for Strauss, nature and humanity remain locked in eternal struggle, with the upper voices in the orchestra resting on a B-major chord and the low strings enigmatically playing the first C of the nature motif.

— Note by Amalia Bandy

BIOGRAPHY

The Chinese-American violinist LUKE HSU is from Katy, Texas. He has dazzled audiences around the world for his virtuosic brilliance and original interpretation, leading the Montreal Gazette to state "Hsu is in a class by himself with total command of the instrument, fearless technical facility, assertive projection of musical ideas, and rapport with the audience." Following his Viennese debut of Beethoven's violin sonatas, Der Standard praised Hsu for his "blend of period and modern performance practices that created an original and poetic outlook on the music of Beethoven." Hsu has also soloed with many major orchestras in the United States including the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen, and the Houston and Dallas Symphony Orchestras. His performances have been broadcast nationally and internationally throughout public radio stations around the world, including NPR. An alumnus of the prestigious Montreal International Musical Competition and the Klein International String Competition, Hsu has garnished numerous prizes from national and international competitions.

Hsu started playing the violin with his mother, Yueming Song. This was followed by instruction from Fredell Lack. Currently, he is a junior at The Shepherd School of Music studying with the world-renowned violinist Cho-Liang Lin. He performs this evening as a winner of the 2010 Shepherd School Concerto Competition.

UPCOMING ORCHESTRA CONCERTS

Thursday, Dec. 2, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Mendelssohn - *The Hebrides, Op. 26* (*Fingal's Cave*); Ravel - *Ma Mère l'Oye (Mother Goose): 5 pièces enfantines* (Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); and Tchaikovsky - *Serenade for Strings in C Major, Op. 48*. Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

Friday, Dec. 3, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Wagner - *Prelude to Act III of "Lohengrin"*; Stravinsky - *Symphony in C* (Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); and Brahms - *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major, Op. 83* (Jon Kimura Parker, soloist). Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.



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